

U.S. Department of State  
Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration  
**U.S. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM NEWS**

Volume 2, Issue 2

June 15, 2004

# Liberians Considered for Resettlement

*Focus is on female heads of households*

At the end of March 2004, PRM organized a Targeted Response Team (TRT) to Guinea and Ghana to identify possible groups for resettlement among the large populations of Liberian refugees in the region. Participants included representatives from PRM, DHS, UNHCR, IOM and an NGO, as well as OPE participation in the Ghana portion of the trip. The team visited Guinea from March 29 – April 2 and Ghana from April 2 – 8.

In Guinea, the team looked at a fairly developed group profile being prepared for possible submission to the US Refugee Program (USRP). The UNHCR office in Conakry conducted a social survey used to identify several groups with similar characteristics and persecution claims. The TRT spent a day in the UNHCR offices in Conakry, separating several thousand social surveys into distinct groupings and looking at persecution histories as reported on the surveys for claims that would meet US legal requirements. The exercise resulted in a grouping of about 2500 individuals for potential group referral, mainly focused on female heads of household who were victims of violence. (This group submission was approved by UNHCR Geneva in May 2004 and forwarded to PRM for action.)

The rest of the week in Guinea was spent visiting N'zerekore to assess the possibilities for doing at least

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**Women and children at Laine Camp in Guinea.**

## TRT Considers Liberians in Guinea and Ghana for Resettlement

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part of the processing of a group referral on-site. The party visited Laine Camp and the UNHCR office in N’zerekore, looking at potential locations for processing activities.

Team members wrote a draft report and worked out a timeline for processing a group referral. Logistical and related constraints were raised, including the impact of the rainy season, the remoteness of the location, and UNHCR’s planned repatriation for Liberian refugees.

The team experienced some unexpected excitement when preparing to leave N’zerekore late in the week, as the UNHCR plane that was coming from Conakry to pick them up could not land at the N’zerekore airstrip due to a landing gear malfunction. The plane later made a crash-landing at Conakry, but no one on the plane was hurt. The TRT group, however, was temporarily stranded in N’zerekore, experiencing first-hand the challenges of logistics in such a remote location.

Luckily, a satellite phone allowed communication with PRM’s Refugee Coordinator in Accra, who worked with various partners to reroute a World Food plane to N’zerekore to retrieve the team.

In Ghana, the team visited Buduburam Camp near Accra, after which all partners met to discuss possible group referrals and the mechanics of processing them in both Guinea and Ghana.

The TRT’s work has already resulted in a group referral from Guinea where some 2,500 refugees in need of a durable solution may benefit from this initiative.



Liberian refugee children at Laine Camp hamming it up.



Director of PRM Admissions Office Terry Rusch chats with UNHCR Ghana country representative Thomas Albrecht at Buduburam Camp. A camp school is in the background.



PRM’s Jennifer Christensen, after arrival in N’zerekore, stands by ill-fated plane that crashed two days later.

# A/S Dewey Offers Encouragement to Partners, Refugees in Kenya



**A/S Dewey views classroom during Kakuma visit. Lutheran World Federation provides primary and secondary education at the camp.**

“Every day we think of Kenya.” Those words, spoken by Assistant Secretary of State Arthur E. Dewey of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) during a recent three-day trip to Kenya, were a reminder of the importance the US Government places on refugee assistance, protection, and resettlement.

A/S Dewey made his remarks at Kakuma camp where, accompanied by representatives of UNHCR, IOM, and WFP, he was given a tour and briefing by various agencies working there.

About 100,000 refugees, mainly Sudanese, live in Kakuma. The camp also houses Congolese, Rwandans, Burundians, and about 10,000 Somali Bantu. Nearly all of the latter group will be resettled to the US, joining the approximately 4,000 Somali Bantu who are already living here in 25 cities and towns throughout the country. The majority of the Somali Bantu spent most of the past decade in the Dadaab camp along the dangerous Somali-Kenyan border until being moved to Kakuma in 2002.

A/S Dewey met with Kenya’s Vice President and Minister of Home Affairs Moody Awori and briefed him on refugee resettlement activities. He also met with many international organization and NGO partners and with hundreds of refugees at Kakuma. A refugee leader thanked him for coming and for US assistance.

Protection was a focus of the trip. Some refugees expressed concern over security and a UNHCR official noted that women face the “double jeopardy” of being both females and refugees. Sexual violence in the camps is much lower than two years ago but still too high, the official stated. A/S Dewey said “protection is priority number one” and emphasized the need for sufficient staffing. He added that resettlement is a form of protection.

He delivered a message of encouragement to everyone he met, but asked NGO partners to pass the word to other donor countries that they need to share responsibility for assisting refugees. He said that the Darfur situation, on top of other humanitarian crises, has about exhausted the US ability to supply food. (Since his visit, PRM has contributed \$1 million in response to a WFP appeal.)

# U.S. to resettle Vietnamese living in Philippines

Some 1,855 Vietnamese nationals living in the Philippines since 1989 will be considered for resettlement in the United States, as the result of an agreement signed between the two countries in April.

Assistant Secretary Arthur E. Dewey of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration hailed the agreement in a meeting April 29 at the State Department with Vietnamese-American refugee advocates and press.

Joe Cuddihy, Director of Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations for US Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security and Nguyen Van Hanh, Director of the Office of Resettlement at the Department of Health and Human Services also voiced their support for the initiative, which is intended to provide a comprehensive and durable solution for these Vietnamese, many of whom have relatives living in the US.



**Assistant Secretary Dewey (top center) addresses Vietnamese refugee advocates. He is flanked by Joe Cuddihy of DHS (left) and Nguyen Van Hanh of HHS (right).**

Processing is expected to begin before the end of September. For the minority of the group who the US is not able to interview or approve, the Philippine government will make best efforts to offer residency.

“This agreement typifies our commitment not to leave anyone

behind,” AS Dewey said. “It is a direct reflection of our longstanding effort to solve longstanding refugee problems.” He noted the support of those in the room and members of the US Congress, but said the agreement was achieved mainly because “It is the right thing to do.” Cuddihy, in his remarks, noted that Vietnamese in the United States have demonstrated that they do well and become self-sufficient.

The Vietnamese-American advocates, who came from as far away as California and Australia, expressed their gratitude for the initiative. “Words cannot express how thankful we are for your decision and your generosity,” said one community leader.

They asked questions about eligibility criteria, especially for those married to Filipinos or previously denied by the INS (the predecessor to CIS), and urged the US officials to grant interviews to as many of the group as possible.

## FY 2003/2004 Admissions Statistics

Region	FY 2003 Regional Ceiling	FY 2004 Regional Ceiling	Total Arrivals in FY 2003 (as of 5/31/03)	Total Arrivals in FY 2004 (as of 5/31/04)
Africa	20,000	25,000	3,666	15,712
East Asia	4,000	6,500	1,258	917
Europe & Central Asia	16,500	13,000	6,886	6,617
Latin America & Caribbean	2,500	3,500	173	1,324
Near East & South Asia	7,000	2,000	2,386	1,771
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>14,369</b>	<b>26,341</b>